551 the tua Ngolo, from which come Nyana Ngolo, Barama Ngolo, Solo-Ngolo, etc. In the family of the Bambara chiefs of Femay (2) (a canton in the circle of Djeimé), the eldest son was

2. See Humblot.

given the name of the paternal grandfather; the second son was called Moussa; the third, Abdoullah; the fourth, Ngizi; and the fifth, Souleyman. The girls were called, in order of age: first, Fatouma; second, Awa; third, Nyele-ba or Nye-ba; fourth, Dyomene; fifth, Kounadi; and the sixth, Aminata (2) [Ed., footnote 2 above].

There are other names very commonly used for the eldest child: Ntyi and its endless variants for boys; Nya or Nyele for eldest daughters. The last two are so common in the Ségou region that the Soninké derisively designate the Bambara of that area with the expression, Nya ni Nyele-u, "the people of Nya and
●[606] Nyele." Since husband and wife are forbidden by custom to pronounce the names of their respective parents-in-law, complications arise when, as often happens, a child is named for them. Respect for the interdict is preserved by using a paronym: for a boy, Tye-koro, "the old man"; for a girl, Moso-koro, "the old woman." To satisfy this same interdict, there are true synonyms locally: thus, for Mussa the name Dyigi is used; for Mori-ba, Bo-dyan. Individuals are often designated by these double names whose two parts are synonymous; thus, there are the Mussa-Dyigi or Dyigi-Moussa, the Bodyan-Moriba, and so forth.

The foregoing are some of the characteristic traits that show how individuals are named among the Bambara, but actually the subject is inexhaustible.

846 After the name-giving ceremony, the mother resumes her normal life, although she must still observe certain prohibitions: notably, there must be no sexual intercourse for the first three months; and during the same period she must not change her coiffure nor leave the village. Once this period is over, she covers herself with jewelry, [215] beads and pieces of amber -- borrowed from neighbors or relatives, if need be -- rubs the baby with butter, and goes to present him to the local notables.

584 574 her mother, step-mothers, and sisters -- join them, and the little procession goes to the religious head, the gnéna-sonnaba, priest of the dasiri, genie protector of the village, who gives some advice to the child and sets the day of her return. On leaving the village, the girl stops and refuses to go on; the youths take hold of her and carry her in their arms, and she abandons herself to cries and shouts that must not cease before she reaches the edge of the fields that surround the village.

584 431 Although the bride price is set, it is more difficult to determine the value of the fiancé's presents of millet, hens, salt, kola, and d'lo, or millet beer. The size of these presents, given gratuitously over four, five, or six years and often more, depends largely on the fortune of each man and the prestige of the fiancée's family. At harvest time he supplies one or two baskets of millet /each/ weighing 20 to 40 kilograms; at the great annual sacrifice offered to the family boli he provides a hen, salt, kola nuts, and dégé, or millet flour mixed with honey water. From time to time he gives his prospective father-in-law some well-filled jugs of d'lo containing at least 20 to 30 liters /each/, and if there is a festival at his home, he is careful not to forget the latter. He shows his generosity at the festival on the occasion of his fiancée's excision (1); at the da woro, or festival of

1. A Bambara man is not present at the festival which takes place at the excision of his fiancée.

the sixth day, he shows himself to be generous, and the guardian of the wedding gifts takes her the required present, a loincloth in black stripes on a yellow background, four to five pounds /the French livre equals one half a kilogram, a little more than a pound avoirdupois/ of butter, two to three kilograms of salt, 20 to 30 liters of d'lo, or millet beer, an equal amount of dégé, or flour mixed with honey water, and finally some decorative ornaments -- a bead necklace, a piece of amber, a bracelet. These last gifts are in no way required; they are given purely out of amiable courtesy.

584 606 One little fact without importance, remains to be noted. From the time of the engagement, the fiancée may not eat in the presence

of her father-in-law nor linger with him in endless conversations, especially when no witnesses are present, and the fiancé is subject to the same rules with regard to his mother-in-law. /206/

In a word, they may no longer even look at each other! If the fiancé dies before the wedding, it is in good taste for the girl to become the fiancée of a younger brother, but if there is no brother she regains her liberty and keeps her bride price. If the fiancée dies, the family usually keeps the bride price they have received; custom permits the fiancé to demand the return of half the bride price but, in the eyes of everyone, to do so would indicate a lack of tact and delicacy. But if for one reason or another the engagement is broken, the bride price and small presents are returned to the fiancé in their entirety.

4. The Wedding of a Young Bambara Girl

The fiancé asks for the girl (1). -- The fourou fen (the bride

1. It happens sometimes that the family cannot refuse the suitor's request for the girl, although she does not have all her trousseau. In that case the wedding festival is put off, but she is led to her husband, and a little private celebration takes place on that day. When she has her trousseau she goes back to her family, and the big festival is held.

price and small presents) have been paid, the fiancée is a grown young lady who has long been excised, and only rags remain of the beautiful yellow loincloth with black stripes which was received at the da woro, or festival that follows the sixth day after the circumcision. A kouara -- she has reached her full development and henceforth can only decline in grace and beauty, and her fiancé desires her. The